Ancient Greek Dialects

AncientMacedonian : A case study

Ancient Greek Language

It is very important to emphasize that what we call "Ancient Greek", classical Greek included, was **not a common Greek language** but a number of dialect groups (διάλεκτοι) and local dialects (ιδιώματα) of the Greek language, broadly or locally spoken and used as official languages for each City-State. Texts from the 15th cent. B.C. till the last quarter of the 4thcent. B.C. allover Greece show that **only dialects**(Greek dialects of course, but not common Greek) **were spoken and written in Greece, till Alexander the Great.**What is unique and worth to be mentioned is that even literature (tragedies, comedies, poetry, prose) was written and performed in dialects, which differed according to the type of literature.There were used, so to say, **"literary dialects"**. The dialectal differentiation of Greek was mainly due to the political system of City-State (each City-State used its own dialect in official documents) and was due also to practical difficulties in communication because of the geographical structure of Greece.

The Greeks used four (4) major dialects to speak and write Greek: *Attic, Ionic, Achaean* and *Doric.* It was only in the last quarter of the 4th century B.C. that **a common Greek language**was established, the so-called ***Alexandrian Koine***, based on Attic dialect, with elements of Ionic dialect, and some specific lexical items from Achaean and Doric dialects (like Doric *λοχαγός,*Achaean *βροτός,* Achaean*ὄνυμα*instead of *ὄνομα*in words like *συνώνυμος, ἐπώνυμος*etc.).

Alexandrian Koine was used till the 4th or —according to others— till the 6th century A.D. Then, the so-called *Atticistic Greek,* an imitation of classical Attic Greek, actually a scholar language, formed and used since the 1st cent. B.C. was established in written speech and was upgraded to official language bythe Byzantine emperor Justinian[527-265].Common people, of course, continued speaking a more simple form of Greek, the development of Greek Koine, which was to constitute later the so-called *δημοτικήγλώσσα.*

One of the*ancient* Greek dialectsspoken in Northern Greece, in Macedonia, was *Macedonian Greek,* a Greek dialect belonging —as I argue— to the Doric dialects or, according to other scholars, being a part of Achaean dialects group.

Macedonian Greek

General

For reasons which will be explained, oral —I emphasize <u>oral</u>— Macedonian Greek is known to us through restricted written evidence: **<u>only 350 words</u>** (100 common nouns and 250 proper nouns). No texts. The crucial question is *why?*The answer is that Macedonian dialect has never been used as official written language of Macedonian State. That simple ! Macedonian dialect was used only as oral language and,*mutatis mutandis,*could be compared to the dialects used today in Greece (what people speak, for instance, in Crete or in Mani or in Trikala or in Corfu or in Tsakonia or in Siatista):that is to say, dialects which are spoken but not written, esp. in official documents.

Because of this fact, Macedonian Greek has been preserved only through evidence coming from scholars (lexicographers,

grammarians, annotators), esp. by scholars concerned with*"linguistic curiosities"*(what the Greeks called *«γλῶσσαι»*), i.e. dialectal words or grammatical forms, deviating from official dialects, esp. from Attic Greek.

It is important to clarify, however, that what we miss is **oral dialect evidence**, not evidence of the official state language, of documents (inscriptions, decrees, texts etc.). There are thousands of such documents of **the official written Macedonian Greek,** which was the classical Attic dialect. It was this dialect which was early established as official language of Macedonian State by the king Philipp, Alexander's father.That happened, of course, due to the high political and cultural prestige that Attic dialect had among ancient Greek dialects and, mainly, due to the political aspirations inside and outside Greece that king Philipp had.

On the Greekness of Ancient Macedonian

•Everybody, familiar with Greek language, will easily recognize as Greek ancient Macedonian words like :

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Common nouns

ἀγκαλίς"ἄχθος. καὶδρέπανονΜακεδόνες" [Ἡσύχ.] ("sickle" from its resemblance with the form of embrace [ἀγκάλη])

ἄγχαρμον «ἀνωφερῆτὴναἰχμήν, **κἄγχαρμον**·τὸτὴνλόγχηνἄνωἔχειν» [Ἡσύχ.] (<ἄναχάρμαν<ἄνωχάρμην "pick up the lance")

ἀκρουνοί «ὅροι·ὑπόΜακεδόνων» [Ἡσύχ.] (<ἄκρα "boundaries")

ἀμαλή «ἀμαλή·ἡάπαλή. ἡδὲλέξιςΜακεδόνων» [ΜέγαἘτυμ.] ("soft")

ἄργελλα «οἴκημαΜακεδονικόν, ὅπερθερμαίνοντεςλούονται» [Σούδα] ("a construction made of [ἄργιλλος] clay")

ἀργίπους «ἀετός·Μακεδόνες» [Ἡσύχ.] ("swift-footed, eagle")

ἀρκόν«σχολήν. Μακεδόνες» [Ἡσύχ.] (= ἀργός inactive)

κάραβος «ὑπὸΜακεδόνωνἡπύλη» [Ἡσύχ.] ("gate")

κεβαλά[ΜέγαἘτυμ.] ("head")

κοράσιον[ΣχολιαστήςὉμήρου «εἰδὲτρέποιτοτὸ**η**εἰς**α**παρὰΔωριεῦσιδιὰτοῦ**α**!*πρυμνάσιον, κορυφάσιον.* Οὕτωςἔχεικαὶτὸ*κοράσιον*, ὅμᾶλλόνἐστιΜακεδονικόν» ("girl")

νικάτωρ [Πολύβιος- Titus Livius "cohorsregia, quos Nicatores appellant (Macedones)" — Ἡσύχ. «νικάτορες·οἱἀκμαιότατοιἐνταῖςτάξεσιν» — ΣέλευκοςΑʹ Νικάτωρ] ("victorious, unconquerable, invincible')

παραός «ἀετός·Μακεδόνες» [Ἡσύχ.] (<παρῶος /παρωός «grey-red" color for eagle)

πέλιος[Στράβων «ότικατὰΘεσπρωτοὺςκαὶΜολοττοὺςτὰςγραίας*πελίας*καὶτοὺςγέροντας*πελίους*ὀνομάζουσιν, καθάπερκαὶπαρὰΜακεδόσι» (" old man, ambassador, deputy")

πεζαίτερος("infantry-men")

χάρων «ὁ λέων κατὰ Μακεδόνας» [Σχολ. Λυκόφρ.] ("lion")

Propernames

Ἀγάθων,
Ἀέροπος,Αἰσχρίων,**Ἀλέξανδρος,**Ἀλέξαρχος,Ἀλκέτας,Ἀλκίμαχος,Ἀμύντας, Ἀμφοτερός, Ἀντίγονος, Ἀντιγόνη, Ἀντίπατρος,Ἀργαῖος, Ἀρριδαῖος, Ἀρσινόη, Ἀρχέλαος, Ἀταλάντη, Ἄτταλος, Βάλακρος, Βερενίκη, Γοργίας, Γυγαία, Δάμων, **Δημήτριος**, Ἑλλάνικος, Εὐπόλεμος, Εὐρυδίκη, Εὐρυνόη, **Εὐρώπη**, Ἡρακλείδης, Ἡφαιστίων, Θρασέας, Ἱππόλοχος, Κάρανος, Κάσανδρος,Κλεῖτος, Κλεοπάτρα, Κοινός, Κρατερός, Λαοδίκη,**Λεωνίδας**, Λυσίμαχος, Μελέαγρος,**Μενέλαος,** Νεοπτόλεμος, Νίκαια, **Ὀρέστης,**Πανταλέων, Παυσανίας, Περδίκκας, Πολυπέρχων, Πτολεμαῖος, Σέλευκος, Στρατονίκη, Σωσθένης, Φίλα, **Φίλιππος,** Φιλόξενος, Φίλων, Φιλώτας, Χαρικλής

•It is remarkable that in the linguistic feeling, the experience,the knowledge and the awareness of Ancient Greeks all over Greece, especially those concernedwith the language, Macedonian dialect was considered and frequently referred to as one of the Greek dialects, spoken by the Greeks.

Hesychios, a Greek lexicographer of the 5th cent. A.D., has collected the so-called *γλῶσσαι*("queer", rare, or unknown in meaning or deviating grammatical forms from Greek dialects)and comments on them. Examples:

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***ἀκόντιον*·**δοράτιον, μικράλόγχη· <u>Μακεδόνες</u> ("small glance")

***ἄσπιλος*·**<u>χείμαρροςὑπὸΜακεδόνων</u>. ("torrent – goat")

γώπας·κολοιοὺς· Μακεδόνες. (“magpie” [a kind of bird])

Ζειρήνη·ἈφροδίτηἐνΜακεδονίᾳ.

κάραβος·ἔδεσμα, ὥςφασιν, ὠπτημένονἐπ’ ἀνθράκων· ὑπὸδὲτῶνΜακεδόνωνἡπύλη· καὶτὰἐντοῖςξηροῖςξύλοιςσκωλήκια· καὶτὸθαλάττιονζῷον. (“shrimp – gate”)

ματτύης·ἡμὲνφωνὴΜακεδονική, ὄρνις·καὶτὰἐκτοῦζωμοῦαὑτοῦλάχαναπεριφερόμενα. [Ἀθήναιος : «*ματτύηνὠνόμαζονπᾶντὸπολυτελὲςἔδεσμα* [...] εἴτεἰχθὺςεἴη, εἴτεὄρνις, εἴτελάχανον, εἴτεἱερεῖον, εἴτεπεμμάτιον»] (“gourmet food”)

Ξανδικά·ἑορτὴΜακεδόνων, Ξανδικοῦμηνὸςἀγομένη (Macedonean feast to honor AppolloXanthos) [Σούδα «ἐναγίζων·ἐναγίζουσινοὖντῷΞάνθῳΜακεδόνεςκαὶκαθαρμὸνποιοῦσιτοῖςἵπποιςὡπλισμένοις»]

•Macedonian is only one among Greek dialects, from which Hesychios collects his *γλῶσσαι*, with no special distinction or differentiation from the other dialects. Examples :

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ἄβαγνα·ῥόδα**Μακεδόνες**

ἀβάθων·διδάσκαλοςΚύπριοι

ἀβελιακόν·ἡλιακὸνΠαμφύλιοι

ἀβρανίδας·κροκωτοὺςΛάκωνες

ἀβρεμής·ἀβλεπὴςΚύπριοικαὶΘετταλοί

ἀβροῦτες·ὀφρῦς**Μακεδόνες**

ἀβώρ·ἠὼς<u>Λάκωνες</u>

•According to **Herodotus**, the renowned Greek historian, "the father of history" (5th century B.C.), the Greek Dorians lived in the region of Mountain Pindos, originally named*"Macedonians"*, and it was only later that they came to Peloponnese :

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«ΤὸΔωρικόν [...]οἴκεεἐνΠίνδῳ, <u>Μακεδνὸνκαλεόμενον</u>·ἐνθεῦτενδὲ [...] ἐςΠελοπόννησονἐλθὸνΔωρικὸνἐκλήθη».

(Herod. I,56)

•The same historian states that the Spartans and Corinthians as well as the citizens of Sicyon, Epidaurus and Troizen werea Dorian and Macedonian «ἔθνος»

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«Ἐόντεςοὗτοι [sc. Λακεδαιμόνιοι, Κορίνθιοι, Σικυώνιοι, Ἐπιδαύριοι, Τριζήνιοι] Δωρικόν<u>τεκαὶΜακεδνὸνἔθνος</u>, ἐξἘρινεοῦτεκαὶΠίνδουκαὶτῆςΔρυοπίδοςὕσταταὁρμηθέντες».

(Herod. VIII, 43)

•More characteristicis the epigram about a girl named *Κοπρία*:

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«Οὔνομαμὲν [δηλ. Κοπρία] Μακέταιςἐπιχώριον·οὕνεκαμεμφθῆμηδὲἑνί· Κοπρίανμ' ὠνόμασανγενέται».

(Kaibel, Epigr. Graeca 313)

She apologizes that her name isill-sounding (it comes from the wordκόπροςwhich means "dung", "manure") but she explains that it is a name used by Macedonians (Μακέται as well as Μακεδνοί are parallel ancient forms for Μακεδόνες).Therefore she asks that nobody blames her for it; after all, it were her parents who gave her that name !

•In the well-known etymological dictionaryof 12th century A.D. under the title **ΜέγαἘτυμολογικόν** (Etymologicum Magnum) the unknown lexicographer (rather a compiler of ancient information) refers to the etymology of the goddessnameἈφροδίτη (Venus). He argues that Ἀφροδίτη comes from Ἀβροδίαιτη"delicately feeded". What is worth to notice here is that thegrammarian spontaneously uses Macedonian dialect to explain phonetically the name of Ἀφροδίτη. He argues that the name derives fromἀ**β**ροδίαιτη, and in order to justify the presence of -β- instead of -φ- that occurs in Ἀ**φ**ροδίτη, he calls to Macedonian in whichβ occurs instead of φ. I quote :

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«ΟδὲΔίδυμοςπαρὰ*τὸἀβρὸντῆςδιαίτης* … τοβτῷ*φσυγγενέςἐστι·* δῆλονἐκτοῦΜακεδόναςμὲντὸν*ΦίλιππονΒίλιππον*καλεῖκαὶτὸν *φαλακρὸνβαλακρὸν·* *καὶτοὺςΦρύγαςΒρύγαςκαὶτοὺςἀνέμουςδιὰτὸφυσᾶνφυσήτας, βύκτας.*

(Etym. Magnum,v. Ἀφροδίτη)

•Another grammarian derives etymologically the noun κεφαλή from the verb κυφῶ / κυφοῦσθαι, based on a word used by Hippocrates for "head", again with β instead of φ, the word κύβητος and the corresponding word κεβλήν of Macedonian. Once again he explains that β stands for φ in this dialect :

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«κεφαλή· ἀπὸτοῦκεκυφῶσθαι, ἤγουνκεκάμφθαι […]καὶἹπποκράτηςκύβητον, Μακεδόνεςδὲκεβλήν, τὸβἀντὶτοῦφλαμβάνοντεςὡςἐπὶΒερενίκης Φερενίκηγάρἐστιν».

(Anecd. Oxon. [Cramer] II, 456, 27)

[cf. Etym. M., v. Βέροια : *«Βέροια·πόλιςΜακεδόνων, ἥνφασινὑπόΦέρητόςτινοςκτισθεῖσαν, ΦέροιακαὶκατὰΜακεδόναςΒέροια, τροπῇτοῦφεὶςβ, ὡςΦερενίκηΒερενίκη, ἡγυνὴτοῦπατρὸςΠτολεμαίου, τοῦφτραπέντοςεἰςβ, καὶτὴνκεφαλὴνκεβαλὴνλέγουσι»]*

•Most important is the fact that the famous grammarian **Apollonius**,2nd cent. AD, the author of «Περὶσυντάξεως» (whose nickname was «δύσκολος»), in his explanation of the formation of homeric nouns ending in -āinstead of -ης (*νεφεληγερέτā*instead of *νεφεληγερέτης, ἱππότā*instead of *ἱππότης*etc.) he argues that this noun formation comes either from Macedonian or from Thessalian dialect. This means that the famous grammarian felt that Macedonian was a very old Greek dialect, which could be used to explain even some peculiarhomeric forms :

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«ἡκλητικὴἀντ' εὐθειῶνπαραλαμβάνεται**<u>κατὰΜακεδονικὸν</u>**ἢΘεσσαλικὸνἔθος , ὡςοἱπρὸἡμῶντὸτοιοῦτονἐπιστώσαντο».

(Apoll. Dyscol. III, 34 [ed. J. Lalot]

[Cf. Eustath.,adHom. γ 68, p. 1457, 18 *«καὶπερὶτοῦ<u>ἱππότα</u>δέ, ποιητικῆςταύτηςεὐθείαςτῶνἑνικῶν, ἥνκαὶὅσαςκατ'αὐτήν,<u>ὁτοξότα</u>, <u>ὁἱππηλάτα</u>καὶτὰςὁμοίας, ΕὐδαίμωνὁΠηλουσιώτης**<u>Μακεδόνωνγλώσσης</u>**εἶναιλέγει»*]

Against the genuine character of Ancient Macedonian

Two main linguistic arguments were used in the past against the genuine Greek character of Ancient Macedonian :

(i) The occurrence of the sounds β, γ, δinstead of φ, θ, χ:

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<u>Β</u>ίλιπποςinstead of **<u>Φ</u>**ίλιππος

<u>Β</u>ερενίκηinstead of**<u>Φ</u>**ερενίκη

κε**<u>β</u>**αλάinstead of κε**<u>φ</u>**αλά

(ii) The great number of *loan words* in Macedonian.

In terms of these two linguistic data it has been argued in the past by a very small number of linguists that Macedonian was a

separate **"mixed language"**, a mixture of Greek with Illyrian and Thracian.

(i) Regarding the first argument, the consonants written with βδγwere not pronounced as b d g (voiced stops) but as v (voiced spirants or fricatives), just like the waythey are pronounced in Modern Greek, going back to 3rd cent. B.C. This means that this phonological pattern anticipated what was later generalized in all Greek. The change was enabled by the fact that v could easilyinterchange with the phonetically similar sounds f θχ(they were bothfricatives), to which they had very early changed the originally *phthkh*consonants of Macedoniandialect (the so-called *aspirate stops* changed to *non-aspirate fricatives*).

This means that in Ancient Macedonian Greek there has taken place very early a phonological development (named *spirantisation* or *devoicing*) which was generalized later in Greek, being the most prolific characteristic of Greek consonantism in the transition from Ancient Greek to Koine Greek and to Modern Greek. This has been my theoretical explanation of the issue, published in a paper under the title *"Mediae question in Ancient Macedonian Greek reconsidered"*,(*Essays in Linguistics offered in Honor of Oswald Szemerenyi,* 1991), an explanation which has been almost generally accepted for the phonological structure of Ancient Macedonian.

Thus, far from being a non-Greek feature, this phonological development (βδγto be pronounced asv andφθχas f θχ) proves to be an early systemic tendency of Greek towards a more symmetrical consonantal system,

which came to be the overall characteristic of the phonological system of Greek since the time of Koine Greek. This change was so early achieved in Macedonian dialect, because —as we said— it was only orally used and major changes were not "blocked" by the conventional and conservative character of written language.

(ii) As to the second argument, regarding the loan-words from neighboring languages (Illyrian and Thracian),there is no reason to deny it as this is a frequent and common fact among neighboring peoples, especially at that region and in that time. This is a usual case which in no way consists an argument for *"a mixed language"* or for *"a distortion"* of the character of Greek language.

Ancient Macedonian dialect : Achaean or Doric ?

There has been a long discussion among linguists as to which dialectal group of Ancient Greek Macedonian dialect belongs to. There have been three views:

(i) The aeolean (achaean) view. It was mainly argued by the German linguist **Otto Hoffmannn**(*Die Makedonen. IhreSprache und ihrVolkstum.*1906 [1974]), the one who first proved convincingly that Ancient Macedonian is pure Greek.According to this view, Macedonian shares more linguistic features to be found in *Northern Achaean*, the so-called *Aeolian group*, to which there belong also ancient Thessalian, Beotian and Lesbian dialects.

(ii) **The doric view.** This view was mainly argued by **IoannisKalleris**(*Les anciensMacedoniens. Etude linguistique*

et historique, 2 volumes I [1954], II[1974]). According to it, Ancient Macedonian dialect should be classified within the group of Doric or the Northwestern group, together with Epirotic, Phocian (Delphic), Locrian and Elian.

(iii) **The mixed or "Aeolodorian" view.** That was actually the view of the famous Greek linguist **George Chadzidakis.** According to him Ancient Macedonian (together with Pamphylian dialect in Minor Asia) could make up a dialectal group within Northwestern (that is within Doric group), as a kind of "a sub-group" .

On the basis of new linguistic arguments I have argued since 1988 on the occasion of the *1st International Congress Of Macedonian Studies,* organized at La Trobe University by Prof. AnastasiosTamis, that *"The Macedonian dialect, although it is presented with certain elements which are considered Achaean, has crucial Doric characteristics or, more precisely,belongs to the northwestern Greek dialects.The arguments in favor of this position are primarily based on the phonological and lesson the grammaticalstructure of the Macedonian dialect and constitute, in my opinion, strong evidence regarding the Doric character of this dialect."*Let me mention, by the way, that in a very recent book of 2012, published in Greece by the *Centre for Greek Language,* entitled *"Ancient Macedonia : Language, History, Culture"*, Professor Julian Mendez Dosuna (University of Barcelona) has come to the same result, after having considered all aspects of research conducted on the Ancient Macedonian dialect.

(i)Phonological level. What I have proved is that a number of characteristic features of the Achean dialects, which would lead to classify Ancient Macedonian to the Achaean or Aeolic dialects group, are not found in Macedonian :

Maced. *δράμις*"a kind of bread", butAchean**δρόμις*

Maced.*δάρυλλος*"oak", but Achean**δόρυλλος*

Maced.*κο(μ)μάραι*"shrims", butAchean**κομμόραι*

Maced.*Κράτερος*(proper name), butAchean **Κρότερος*

Maced. *ζέρεθρον (<δέρεθρον)* "abyss", but Achean*βέρεθρον*

Maced. *αἰδῶσσα*"hall", but Achean*αἴθοισα,* Att. *αἴθουσα*

(ii)Grammatical level. In contrast, on grammatical level a number of characteristics of Macedonian are to be found mainly in Doric dialects :

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κεβαλά, λακεδάμα – ψευδάνωρ, κοράσιον, νικάτωρ

(τοῦ) Παυσανία, Ἀμύντα, Περδίκκα(genitive)

(τῶν) πελιγᾶν (=πελιγῶν) (genitiveplural)

ἡμεροδρόμας (=ἡμεροδρόμος), βουκεφάλας (=βουκέφαλος) (-*ας*formationinsteadof-*ος*)

(iii)Lexical level. Regarding the lexical level (the words of Macedonian dialect) Kalleris argues: "*It is enough to take a look at […] the number of words found in each one of these [Macedonian and Doric] to realize that most of these words are common to Macedonian and to the Doric dialectsin the broader sense (i.e. the main Doric and the northwestern), while few of them are common to Macedonian and the Aeolian dialects. This is something which allows us to come to the conclusion that Macedonian was closely related to the dialects of the first group (the Doric), but it also presents certain similarities to the Aeolian dialects"*

Conclusion. On all levels (phonological, grammatical and lexical) common structural features of Macedonian and Doric lead us to classify Macedonian within the Doric, esp. the Northwestern group of Doric dialects.

The linguistic truth for the pseudonymous "Macedonian language" of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)

I call to your attention now. Listen to this :

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> *Da vi go pretstavamsina mi Blazeta…Mu jadadornaPetrataknigata …Go razbivaliperacot*

Does anybody who knows Greek, would recognize these phrases as Greek or as having anything to do with Macedonian Greek spoken in Macedonia, in Northern Greece for centuries? Would anyone identify this language with Macedonian Greek ? Yet this token of language is precisely the one which is called *"Macedonian language"*by FYROM since 1944, since the time when this district — which was knowntill 1944 as *"VardaskaBanovina" ("administrative region of the river Vardar")—* was renamed by Tito to *"Macedonia"*.And it is this recent (Former Yugoslavian) State with the pseudonymous name "Macedonia", which calls their Slavic language "Macedonian language", causing a confusion with the traditional, historic Greek Macedonian language. Both the name of FYROM as "Macedonia" and the name of their language as "Macedonian" cause intentionally this confusion. Yet, it is evident that only a completely distinctive name like *Skopja*or even a composite name like *"Slavomacedonia"* or *"Vardarmacedonia"*or what elsewould be suitable to denote the identity of this recent

entity, by avoidingin practice the identification of FYROM with the historically established name of Greek Macedonia. That FYROM, however,insists on the name *"Macedonia"* is a provocation and a clear intention to confuse the name of Greek Macedonia with the name of FYROM as "Macedonia", a fact that can only serve political aspirations.

What about the *"Macedonian language"* of FYROM? Does it have any relation to ancient or modern Macedonian Greek? As you heard from the sample that I read for you, it has nothing to do with the language spoken in Greek Macedonia. The language spoken in FYROM is a mixture of Slavic language, a Bulgarian-Serbian mixture. The real name of FYROM's language —coming from its origin and its structure— would be *Bulgaroserbian* or *Serbobulgarian*or *Neoslavic*or *Slavic of Skopia.* It was Bulgarian which was spoken at this area, before this geographical region came to consist a part of Yugoslav Federation, governed by Tito. And it was the Bulgarians who always claimed that this territory belongs to them and who blamed FYROM's government constructing an artificial Serbian language by substituting Bulgarian words and structural elements with Serbian, so that this language does not look like Bulgarian. And it was the Bulgarians who used to call this artificial language *"kolisefskian Serbian"*(after the name of the first prime-minister of Skopia, of Lazar Kolisefki).

All these agree with what great linguists teach about the Slavic language of FYROM. **VitorePisani,** one of the most famous Italian linguists, has written that *"In reality the term 'Macedonian language' is a product of political origin".* Also the French Slavologist**Andre Vaillant** clarifies that *"the name Bugari is in reality the national name of the Slavs of 'Macedonia'*[he means FYROM], *which indicates that the Slavs of this region accepted the name that the Serbians gave to them"*.He also argues that the Slavic spoken in Skopia goes back to

Old Slavic and belongs to the Bulgarian dialects. Finally, **Heinz Wendt,** a German linguist, referring to Slavic languages, says *"Bulgarian and Macedonian, due to their outstanding structural particularities, should be considered as a separate Slavic group and be distinguished from all other Slavic languages".*

Conclusion

From what has been said two things are evident, I hope:

(i) Ancient Macedonian dialect, which was spoken in Greek Macedonia was a pure Greek dialect used for oral communication, a Greek dialect classified within the Doric, esp. the Northwestern group of Greek dialects. It was early replaced in written and oral use with Attic for politicalreasons. This Greek dialect has been continuously used in Greek Macedonia from ancient years till today. This has always been known all over the world as the Macedonian language.

It was only since 1944 that the Bulgaroserbian Slavic of FYROM started to be used with the fictitious name*"Macedonian language"*, a name which has created the confusion described before.And it has been a great mistake of the Greeks (concerned at that time with the German Occupation and the Civil War) that they did not react drastically, they did not protest in international forafor this obvious forgery of historical truth. They assessed that this action of former Yugoslavia was impossible to be successful.

(ii)Equally disorienting is the fictitious name of FYROM as *"Macedonia"*, based on a geographical definition of this

new Yugoslav state, which intentionally —for political reasons— used a national name causing confusion with the preexisting for more than 25 centuries name of Greek Macedonia. The fact that the political leaders of FYROM constantly refer to king Philipp and to Alexander the Great as their predecessors (!) convinces that it is not a mere historical misinterpretation but astriking caseof *"stolen history"*.